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Ex Æd. Sab.
7. November.
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Christo Pat. Gill. Epif.
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A
SERMON
PREACHED before the
KING
AT
VVHITE-HALL,
October the 12th 1662.

BY
RICHARD ALLESTREY, D. D. Chaplain
then in Attendance.

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JOHN XV. 14.

*Ye are my friends, if ye do
whatsoever I command you.*



THE words are a conditional assertion of *Christ's* concerning his *Apostles*, and in them all *Christians*: and they do easily divide themselves into two parts. The

First is a *positive* part, wherein there is a state of great and Blessed advantage, which they are declared to be in present possession of: in these words, *Ye are my friends*.

In which there are *two* things that make up that advantage, 1. a relation, 2. the person related to. *Friends*, and *My friends*. The

Second is a *Conditional* part, wherein there are the *terms*, upon which that possession

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session

session is made over, and which preserve the Right and Title to them: in these words, *If ye do whatsoever I command you*: in which there are *two* things required as *Conditions*.

I. Obedience, *If ye do what I command you*.

II. That Obedience Universal; *If ye do whatsoever I command you*.

The *first* thing that offers itself to our consideration, is the Relation, *Friends*.

It is a known common-place truth, that a Friend is the most useful thing that is in whatsoever state we are: it is the Soul of life, and of content. If I be in prosperity: We know abundance not enjoy'd, is but like *Jewells* in the *Cabinet*, useless while they are there: it is indeed nothing but the *opinion of prosperity*. But tis not possible to *enjoy* abundance otherwise then by *Communicating* it: a man *possesseth* plenty onely *in his friends*, and hath *fruition* of it meerly by *bestowing* it. If I be in *adversity*; to have a person whom I may intrust a trouble to, whose bosom is as open, and as faithful to me, as tis to his own

own thoughts, to which I may commit a swelling secret; this is in a good measure to *unlade*, and to *poure out* my sorrow from me; thus I divide my greivances, which would be insupportable, if I did not disburthen my self of some part of them: now there is no bosom so safe as that where *friendship* lodges: take Gods opinion in the case, *Deut. xiii. 6. If thy brother the son of thy mother, or thy son, or thy daughter, or the wife of thy bosome, or thy friend that is as thine own soul.* This is the highest step in the Gradation. And there is all the reason in the world: for though *Parent*, and *Childe*, are as neer one to other as any thing can be to part of it self; *Husband* and *Wife* are but two different names of the same one, yet these may become bitter and unkind: a *Parent* may grow *cross*, or a *Childe* *refractory*, a *Mother* may be like the *Ostrich* in the *Wilderness*, throw off her *bowels* with her *burthen*; and an ungracious *Son* is *constant* pangs and *travail* to his *Mother*, his *whole* life gives her *after-throws* which are most deadly: Dislikes also may rest within the *Marriage*

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bed,

bed, and lay their heads upon two wedded Pillow's; but none of these unkindnesses can untie the relation; that ends not where the bitterness begins, he is a *Parent* still though froward, and a *Childe* though stubborn; but a *true friend* can be nothing but *kind*: it does include a *deerness* in its essence, which is so inseparable from it, that they begin and end together: a man may be an *Husband* without *loving*, but cannot be a *lover*, that is a *friend*, without *loving*.

And sure to have no one *friend* in this life, no one that is concerned in any of my interests or me my self, none that hath any cares or so much as good wishes for me, is a state of a most uncomfortable prospect. The *Plague* that keeps friends at a distance from me while I live, out of the sphere of my infection, and after gives me death, hath yet less of *Malignity* then this; that leaves me the compassions, the Prayers, all the solitary comforts, all indeed but the outward entertainments of my friends: that, though it shut the Door against all company,

pany, yet, puts a *Lord have Mercy* on the Doore: But this I now described hath none of that, hath no good wishes, nothing else but hate, is worse then a *perpetual Pistelence*.

Yet neither is this State so comfortless, in respect of this life, as not to have a friend in the concernments of the Life to come: none that hath so much kindness for my *Soul* as every man hath for his *Enemies beast*, which if he see faln in a Ditch he will at least give notice that it may be helpt out thence: No one, that when a Sin, like to that *Falling Sicknes* in the Gospel (and it is such indeed without a Parable) is *casting me into the Water*, quenching my parts, my reason, and the Immortal sparke within me, or *throwing me into the Fire*, raising Lascivious heats within, which after will break out into Hell Fires; none yet that will stretch out his hand to catch me, or to pull me out: None that does care to see me Perish to eternity, or that values my *Soul*, which yet did cost the blood of *God*, at a words speaking: This is to be like *Dives* in the

(a) Luke xvi.
24 25.

Flames, to whom they would not lend the help of the ^(a) tip of a finger, or give the kindness of a drop of Water: I am as it were on the other side the Gulse already. Here is the use of friendship, the onely noble one; that's worthy of that blessed quality: when I have one that will be an *assistent Conscience* to me, who, when that within me sleeps, or is benumbed, will watch over my actions; will *testifie* them to my Face, will be as *faithful* to me as the Conscience should be, hold a Glas to my Soul, shew me the staines, and the proud tumours, the foule Ulcers that are there, and then will fret, and rub, or prick, lance, and corrode, to cure those tumours, and do off those spots, such an one is a *familiar Angel-Guardian*, is truly of that blessed heavenly ranke, and onely lesse then the friend in the Text, the person related to, and my next part.

My Friends. There are three things from which men use to take the measures of a friend.

First, From the good things he bestows on them: He that thinks to keep friendship

ship alive onely with air, that gives good words, but parts with nothing, that entertains onely with garbs, and civilities, is but the *pageant* of a friend: They that own having but *one soul*, and seem to clasp as if they would have but *one body* too, cannot keep such *distinct* and *separate proprieties* in other little things, as not to have communication one from the other. And,

Secondly, The *friendship* of these benefits is rated by the measures of our *need* of them. When *Midas* was ready to dy for hunger, his God was kinder to him in a little bread, then in making all that he toucht turn into gold: great things engage but little where there is but little use of them: and all these,

Thirdly, Are endeered by the *Affection* they are given with. Good turns done with design, what need soever I have of them, are *hire*, and not *friendship*; it is the kindness onely that obligeth, the gift without the love does but upbraid and scorn my want.

Now to measure the *friend* here in the *Text*, by these, were an impossible undertaking,

taking, whose friendship did exceed all bounds and measures. I shall do no more towards it, but read the words before my text, which were the occasion of it, *Greater love hath no man then this, that a man lay down his life for his friends,* and then it follows, *ye are my friends.* The token therefore of his friendship, the gift he gave them was his life, rather that was the least he gave: He gave his glory first, that so he might be qualified to give his life: for *ἑαυτὸν ἐκένωσεν* *Phil. ii. 7.* He lessened himself from the condition of being Lord of all, into that of a servant, *ὑπαταλωμένῳ*, *Heb. ii. 9.* being diminished, made lower, meaner then his creatures for the suffering of death. Now with the price of such divine essential glory to buy onely a life, rather onely a possibility of death, that after he might give that life for us, and with his death purchase us an immortal life, is such a gift as no Romance of friendship ever fancied or did aim at: we may have heard of two companions that would dy for one another, that never quarell'd in their lives, but for this, who should suffer first to save the other,

ther, and strave onely for Execution : But for a person of the *Trinity* to leave his heaven to come down to us; to dwell with agonies that he might be at one with us; and betyed to the cross, that he might be united to us; this is a friendship fitt for *Ecstasies* of apprehension. Of all the things that court thy kindness here below, that spread snares, and lay baits for thy friendship, if any bid so fair, so temptingly, if any will give such a price, in God's name let it have thy love, I shall not blame him that engageth his affection there : But sure *Heaven* cannot give a greater gift then this; for what can *God* give greater then himself? Yea I may say *God* could not give so much, for he must be *man* too, to give his life, and this, saith he, *he gave for his friends*, even in our stead, who must have perish'd else eternally, which intimates the *second* thing, the need we had of this.

A need great as the gift, necessarily invincible, that could break into *heaven*, rattle the *Trinity*, to serve its self, throw death into those regions of immortality,

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and which would not be satisfied but with the *bloud* of *God*.

And now is not the kindness, and the condescension of friendship in his expressions too, when he saith, *greater love then this bath no man*? which was the *thirde* dearement.

There never were such *wounds* of loves as those that tore this heart: never such meltings of affection as dissolved this lover into *sweates of bloud*. There was no motive to all this, but his meere love: for all this he designed to us *before we were*, and therefore sure *before we were deserving*, and O our God! thou that from all eternity didst lay contrivances to give thy life for us, so to redeem, and then to glorifie us, what were we then that thou shouldst do this for us? what *were* we then when we *were not*? and yet that thou from the abyss of everlastingness, shouldst think thoughts of such kindness to us, and such blessedness for us, who then *were not*, and *deserved nothing*; and who since we were, have *deserved nothing but damnation*.

And as there was no other motive to all this

this design but *love*, so neither was there any thing but *love* in the fulfilling. Look on your *Saviour* in the garden, and upon *Mount Calvary*, and you shall find him there in as great agonies of *affection* as *torment*, and hanging down his head upon the Cross with languishments of *kindness*, more then *weakness*. His arms stretched out and Rack't, as if on purpose to the posture of *receiving you to his embraces*; and his side opened not onely to *shed Blood* for you, but to make you a *passage to his very Heart*. Look on *him* offering up his Tears, his Prayers, and his Soul for Sin, and in the midst of all, projecting happiness to you, as it were praying, O my Father, here I charge my self with all the guilt of those my friends, I thy onely Son God, one with thee, am content to suffer Torments that they all may be acquitted, Here I lay down my Life that they may have eternal Life, let me be Crucified, so they be Glorified. Which was the purchase and the gift of this his Passion to all his *friends*, even to those that do *what he commands*; which is the *first* condition that

entitles to his friendship, and my next part.

Ye are my friends if ye do what I command you.

I shall not urge, that Great men upon earth will not take any to their Friendship but upon these termes; nor will I plead the reasonableness of this in *Christ*, there being no cause why he should be a friend to any that will daily disoblige him and dishonour him: nor will I press the whole Oeconomy of *Scripture*, which says, all the advantages *Christ* ever gave or meant us, and all the Acts of friendship that he ever did for us were with this design. He gave his *grace that brings salvation* to save us into an estate of sober virtue. *Tit. ii. v. 11. 12.* he gave himself also to Ransom us from our own evil doings, and to redeem us into his obedience. *Tit. ii. v. 14.* without which no dependance on him will availe. *Mat. vii. 21.* He will own no acquaintance with, nor services from them who have friendship with sin: though *they have cast out Devils in his name*, if they retain their vices; though they *do miracles*, if they *do wickedly*, he will bid them depart, profess *he never knew them*, *v. 22. 23.*

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He will not let such have a bare *relation* to his *Name*, nor have the *friendship* of a *title*. 2 *Tim.* ii. 19. All his rewards also that he will give are promised to none other, but them that *do what he commands*, *Apocal.* xxii. 14. that is, *do Evangelically, heartily and faithfully endeavour it*, and do this with all diligence exprest by words, that import all strife imaginable, as *running, wrestling, fighting, warring*. And persevere also *by patient continuance in well doing*, *Rom.* ii. 7. and he hath nothing else but *vengeance* for all others. 2 *Thes.* i. 8. and we have neither *Christ*, nor *Gospel*, nor *Religion*, but with these terms.

But I shall wave all this, and bound my self within the present words, *Greater love hath no man then this, that a man lay down his life for his friend. Ye are my friends if ye do what I command you.* When *Christ* is *boasting* of his love, making *comparisons*, and *tying friendships* with mankind, nay more, contriving *heights and depths of mercy*, such as man hath no comprehension, nor *Fathom* for; when he was preparing to do an act of *compassi-*

on almost equal to his Divinity, when he had resolutions of so much kindness as to give his life that he might shew kindness. Yet could he not then find in his heart to offer or declare one jot of kindness to the men that will not do what he commands, but in the midst of such agonies of compassion, he thought of nothing but infinite indignation and eternal vengeance to the disobedient. *I have but now given my body and my blood even to the Traitor* ^(a) Judas to one who is a ^(b) Devil: *I am going to give my life even for my* ^(c) *enemies, for the* ^(d) *world: but I will give no love to any, have no friendship with any, but the virtuous: no, though they be my own Disciples, ye are my friends, ye my companions and Apostles are my friends, onely on this condition, if ye do what I command you.*

(a) Luc. xxii
19. 20. 21.

(b) John vi. 76

(c) Rom. v. 10

(d) John iii.

16, 17. & vi.

51. & 2 Cor.

v. 19.

And then is it not matter of Astonishment, to see men fancy they have a right in all Christ's actions and sufferings, presume upon his favour and their own happy condition, though they do nothing, or but very little towards this, and the maine of their life be disobedience, as if
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all *Christ's* commands, appointed them to do no commands, and *Christianity* were but a liberty from *virtue*. To pass by those that do nothing but evil, that which the Devil does suggest, or their flesh dictate, and to consider the demurer sort of *Christians*, that pretend a respect to *Christ*, and to Religion, and see what they will doe.

Why sometimes you may find them troubled at their Vices, and themselves; and those troubles breath out in Sighs, and in warme-wishes that they could do that which *Christ* prescribes: to will is sometimes strongly present with them, but to performe they know not how. Alas *Christ* does not tell you that you are his friends if you wish well to him, and his commands, but he requires that you shall do them. These are but vapours of a troubled soul, which howsoever they may chance rise warm, catch a strong suddain heat, breath up in flashing thoughts. They are but meteors, little shooting flames that onely do catch fire and fall and dy; shew fair, but they warme nothing: and so
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these thoughts do never heat the heart into devotions and holy resolutions, the fire is not strong, nor does it live enough, to melt and worke away the filthynesses of the soul: No, though they grow to aversations: for you may find such men, when wearied with the pursuite of their sinning hating their customes, and the engagements to the practice of them: complaining thus, *I know 'tis ill, and 'tis against my heart, that I obey the motions of my passions or lusts: The incitations of my appetite, the usance of the world, the obligations of civility or mistaken honour do indeed prevaile upon me, but 'tis with great reluctancy of minde that I yeild to them, but I cannot avoid it.* There are not few that satisfie themselves with this condition. Now sure *Christ* does not say, *Ye cannot be my friends except you sin against me and against your Knowledge, and your Conscience too.* 'Tis strange that men should think the Heathen instance of a Witch that cryed

—*Video meliora, proboque,
Deteriora sequor*—

I know, and do approve of better things, but cannot choose but follow these that are the worser : strange, that this *fury* that had the *Devil for familiar*, should make *Christ a friend*; that this should be the state of *Gospel Saints*, and of *God's favourites*. 'Tis possible some therefore go yet further to good purposes towards *Obedience*, and have *holy intentions*, but this is not sufficient neither, if to *do his commands* be necessary : for to *purpose* and *intend to do them*, is not certainly to *do them*. Yet where are any, that do aim at doing any more; and there is none of these but does presume upon his interest in *Christ*, and satisfies himself and is secure.

Yet is it hard to find a ground of this their confidence, unless it rise from the unhappy use they make of *God's preserving mercies*, and his kindness to them in the concerns of this life. They see without their cares, and upon very weak entreaties indeed against all provocations both of God and danger; yet his protections secure them all, though they

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neither minde the asking them, nor minde the walking worthy of them. The man whose *sins*, not *prayers*, prepare him for his bed, he sleeps well; perhaps, more soundly then he who at his bed-side throws himself on his face into God's arms, and there *bequeaths* himself to the *securities* of the *Almighty*: And he, whose Sleeps onely refresh him for returns to sin, does often live as long, as safely, and as merrily, as he that dayly, most religiously does begg protections from above. And others that afford the Lord some little *homages*, themselves some *prayers* when their *pleasures* or *occasions* permit, God hath a care of them, and their *desires* flow into them, all does *succeed well* with them. Now they take confidence hence to conclude, these are the *tokens* of *Gods friendship*, and all *his mercies* will come in at the like *easie rates*; that *such a short petition* as committed them to the *refreshments of the night*, and after which they *wak't* into *renewed strengths* and *pleasures*, *such another* shall lay them down in safety, to the sleeps

sleeps of that *long night*, that afterwards will break in *happy resurrection*: for why! God will not sure fail his *own mercies*, but be as friendly to their *souls* as he is to their *bodies*.

And thus God's preservations here, in meer defiance of our provocations, which are the *arts of his long suffering*, his *Strivings of Compassion*, meerly to give us *opportunities* of being reconciled to him, and to *invite* us to be so, while we make them occasions of *carelesness* and *security*, they are so far from being *pledges* of his *friendship*, that they have all the aggravations of *affronted goodness*, become *temptations* and *degrees* of ruin. 'Twere fine indeed if *Christ's* eternal preparations for his friends, would come in to us, without care or doing any thing, as an accession to our pleasures; if when we had lived many years in a *Garden*, our days all *Flower'd* with delight; we might expire into *Paradise*, and in soft aires of *Musick* breath into *Hallelujah's*. But alas! the smooth *easy way* leads down the *Hill*, and he must *strive* and *pant* that will get up into the *Mansions* and the *Bosom* of his

Saviour, and whosoever will be *his friend*, must do *what he commands*.

But is there nothing less indeed will qualify? The Scripture saith, that Abraham believed God, and it was imputed to him for righteousness, and he was called the friend of God, James ii. 23. and then, is Christ more inaccessible, and harder to be made a friend?

Why, truly God and Christ both are so much friends to all true believers, that the life of Christ was given for them; for, God so loved the world that he gave his onely begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life. John iii. 16. nor are there any qualities more signally peculiar to friendship, more engaging then confidence and trust, dependance and relying, embosoming my self in him: now these are but the exercise of Faith; and tis most certain if we heartily endeavour to do what he commands, there is employment then for all this work of Faith, place for its applications and assurances. My Text does make this good. But when his friendship is made over on conditions, as tis not onely in these words, but every where in
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Scripture; (there being not one promise absolute that does concern *Gods favour, justification, and eternal life*: he does not once offer remission of sins, but to those that amend their lives; nay, does express as if he could not give it otherwise, *peradventure they will repent that I may forgive them, Jeremy xxxvi.* 3) The promises therefore being conditional, Faith must be answerable to the promises that it does rest on and apply; and at the most, can be but an assurance, that you shall be partaker of what's promised, that is to say, partaker of the favour and the life of Christ, if ye do his commands. But then if I perform not this condition, to trust upon his friendship which I am not qualified for; to think by faith to receive a pardon, which in that case I am, was never offered me; to apply to my self promises which were never made me, for none were ever made to them that do not do; and to assure my self, Christ will transgress his everlasting Covenant for my Vices sake, meerly to give me leave to enjoy my sins; will do that which God may not do, forgive one that will not repent: If

I believe thus against promise, and against decree, am confident whether Christ will or no, and will rely upon him in despite of him, if such a faith will make us friends, affronts do reconcile. This is indeed to lay violent hands on his favour, and to invade his friendship, and without metaphor, take Heaven by force.

But sure I am, that this is not the faith made Abraham be called the friend of God in that place of Saint James, but a faith that was perfected by doing, v. 22. of that Chapter, a faith that made him offer up his onely Son upon the Altar, v. 21. 'Tis true, he did in hope believe against all hope, Rom iv. 18. So that his faith was stronger then a contradiction, but yet his resolutions of obedience seem stronger then his faith; for he did that even to the cutting off the grounds of all his Faith, and hope. He trusted God would make his promise good to him, make all the Nations of the Earth be blessed in the seed of Isaac; though Isaac had no seed, nor could have, if he should be slain: And he resolved at Gods command himself to slay that Isaac, so to make

make him have no seed. His Faith indeed did not *dispute* the great impossibility; but his obedience *caused* it. He did not question, how can God perform with me when I have offered up my son? I cannot look that a *large Progeny* should rise out of the *Ashes* on the Altar; nor will those Flames that *devour* all my seed at once, make my *seed numerous, lasting, and glorious as the Stars in Heaven*, which he ^(a) promised me: but much less did he question, why should I obey in this? He that does his commands, can but expect what he hath promis'd: but if I should do this command and slay my Son, I make his promise void, and destroy my own expectations: and if I disobey I can but suffer what he bids me do; my own obedience will execute all that his indignation would threaten to my Disobedience. Though *Abraham* had ^(b) *three daies* time, and journey to the Altar, that *Nature* might have leisure the mean while to *reason* with the *precept* thus, and his *affection* might struggle with his *duty*; yet he goes on, resolves to tear out his own bowels, and

(a) Gen. xv. 5.

(b) Gen. xxii.
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cut of his hopes, will Sacrifice his *onely Son*, and Sacrifice *God's promises* to his commands.

And then, He that will trust to *Abraham's* example of *believing*, yet will not follow him at all in *doing*, will obey no commands; that is so far from offering up an *onely Son*, he will not slay an *onely evil custome*, nor part with *one* out of the herd of all his vicious habits; will not give up the satisfaction to any of his *carnal, worldly, or ambitious* appetites; not Sacrifice a *passion* or a *lust* to all the Obligations, that *God* and *Christ* can urge him with, he hath, nor *faith*, nor *friendship*, no, nor *fore-head*. 'Tis true indeed, he that hath *Abraham's faith*, may well assure himself he is *Christ's friend*; but tis *onely* on this account, because he that believes as *Abraham* believed, he will not stick to do *whatever Christ* commands; which is that *universality* of obedience, that is the *next* condition that entitles to *Christ's friendship*, and my *last* part.

Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you.

There is no quality so necessary to a friend,

bed, takes in another now and then, she must not count her self her husbands friend, though she give him the *greatest share* in her affections, no, she is but a *bosom enemy*: and so any one vice allow'd is a *paramour*, sin is whoredome against *Christ*, and our pretended friendship to him in all *other obediences*, is but the *kindness* and the *caresses* of an *adulteress*, the *meer hypocrisie* and *treachery* of love. If it be necessary to the gaining of *Christs friendship* that thou *do his commands*, 'tis necessary that thou *do them all*, that thou divorce thy self from thy beloved sin, as well as any *other*: because, his friendship does no more require *other* obedience then it does *that*, but is as inconsistent with thy *own peculiar* vice as with the rest. Indeed it is impossible that it should bear with any, they being all his murderers. If thou canst find *one* sin that had no hand in putting *Christ* to death, *one* vice that did not come into the *garden*, nor upon *mount Calvary*, that did not helpe to *assassin* thy Saviour, even take thy fill of *that*: but if each had a stab at him, if *no one* of thy vices

vices could have been *forgiven*, had not thy *Jesus* died for it, canst thou expect he should have *kindness* for his agony, or *friendship*, for the man that entertaines his *Crucifiers* in his heart: if *worldly cares* which he calls ^(a) *thorns*, fill thy head with contrivances of *Wealth* and *Greatness*, of filling *Coffers*, and of plating *Coronets* for thee, as the *Thorns* did make him a ^(b) *Crown* too, wouldst thou have him receive thee and these in his bosom, to gore his *Heart* as they did pierce his *Head*? If thou delight in that *intemperance*, which filled his deadly *Cup*, which Vomited *Gall* into it, can he delight in thee? That ^(c) *Cup* which made him fall upon his Face to *deprecate*, will he *partake* in as the *pledge* of mutual Love? He that sunk under, could not bear this *load* of thine, when it was in his *Cross* upon his *shoulders*, will he bear it and thee on his *armes*, when thou fallst under it? When thou wilt cast a *shameful spewing* on his *glory* too, if he own such a friend? Thou that art so *familiar* with his *name*, as thou wert more his *friend* then any in the world, whose Oaths and

(a) *Mat. xiii.*
22.

(b) *Matt.*
xxvii. 29.

(c) *Matt. xxvi.*
38, 39.

(d) *Levit.*
xxiii. 16.

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imprecations, *Moses* sayes ^(d) *strike through* that name, which they so often call upon, thou mayst as well think his heart did attract the *Spear* that pierc'd it, and the wound close upon its head with unions of Love, as that he hath kindness for thee. If *Christ* may make friendship with him, that does allow himself a Sin, he may have fellowship with *Belial*: for him to dwell in any heart that cherisheth a vice, were to descend to *Hell* again. But as far as those Regions of darkness are from his habitation of Glory, and the black spirits of that place from being any of his guard of holy myriads; so far is He from dwelling with, or being friend to him, that is a friend to any wickedness, to him that will not do whatever he commands.

And now if these conditions seem hard, if any do not care to be his friend upon these terms, they may betake themselves to others. Let such make themselves friends of the *Mammon of unrighteousness*: A friend indeed that hath not so much of the insincerities as many great ones have: for this will furnish them with all that

that heart or lust can wish for, all that necessities or wantonness proposeth to it self to dress out pomp or vice: But yet when with enjoyment the affections grow, and become so unquier, work them so, as not to let their thoughts or actions rest, make them quicken themselves, and like the motions of all things that go downwards tending to the Earth, increase by the continuance, grow stronger, and more violent towards the end, then when they are most passionate, it failes them: and having fill'd their life with most unsatisfied tormenting cares, it leaves them nothing but the guilt of all: when their great wealth shall shrink into a single sheet, no more of it be left, but a thin shroud, and all their vast inheritances, but six foot of earth, be gone, yet the iniquity of all will stick close to them: and this false friend, that does it self forsake them, will neither go ^(a) along, nor will let its pomp follow them, raises a cry on them as high as God's tribunal: the cry of all the bloud, all the oppressed rights that bribery till then had stifled, the groans of all those

(a) Psal. xlix.
17.

those poor that greatness, covetousness, or extortion had grown'd and crush't: the yellings of those souls that were starved for want of the bread of life, which yet they payed for, and the price of it made those heaps which will that day appear against their friends and masters, and prove their adversaries to eternal death.

Let others joy in friends that wine does get them: such as have no qualification to endear them, but this, that they will not refuse to *sin* and to be *sick* with their companions: men that do onely drink in their affections, as full of *friendship* as of *liquor*, and probably they do *unload* themselves of both at once, part with their *deariness* and their *drink together*, and alike. I know not whether it be *heats* of *mutual kindness* that inflame these draughts, and the *desires* of them, so as if they did drink thirst; but sure I am, that these *hot draughts* begin the *lake of fire*.

Let others please themselves in an affection that *carnality* cements. These are *warme* friendships I confess, but *Solomon* will tell us *whence* they have their *heat*. Her house,

house, saith he, *does open into* ^(a) *Hell*, and *Brimstone* kindles those libidinous flames. There are *straite bands*, *fetters* in those affections indeed; for the same wise man sayes, *The closets of that sinner are the chambers of death: that* ^(b) *none that go unto her return again, or take hold of the paths of life; it seems she is a friend that takes most irreversible dead hold, she is not onely as insatiate, but as inexorable as the grave, and the eternal chains of fate are in those her embraces. But God keep us from making such strict Covenants with death; from being at friendship with Hell; or in a word, that I say all at once, with any that are good companions onely in sinning. Such men having no virtue in themselves, must needs hate it in others, as being a reproach to them, and therefore they are still besieging it, using all arts and Stratagems to undermine it: and having nothing else to recommend them into mens affections, but their managery of vice, no way to merit but by serving iniquity, they not onely comply with our own evill inclinations, that so they may be grateful, and insinuate*

(a) Prov. vii.
27.

(b) Prov. ii.
19.

sinuate into us, but they *provoke* too and *inflame* those tendencies that they may be *more useful* to us, having no other means to work their ends. And then such friends by the same reason, must be *false* and *trecherous*, and all that we *declaime* at, and *abhorre* in *enemies*, when that shall be the way to serve their ends; because they have no virtue to engage them to be otherwise: and to be such, is to be constant to their own *designs*, their *dispositions* and *usances*. These are the *pests* of all Societies, they speak and live *infection*, and *friendship* with them is to couple with the *Plague*. These do *compleat* and *perfect* what the Devil but *began* in *Eden*: Nurse up *Original sin*, chase inclination into *appetite* and *habit*, suggest and raise desires, and then feed them into *constitution* and *nature*: in a word, are a *brood* of those *serpents*, one of which was enough to destroy *paradise*, and *innocence*. Tis true, a man would think these were our friends indeed, that venture to *Gebenna* for us: Alas they are but more *familiar devils*, work under *Sathan* to bring us to torments, and differ nothing from him,

him, but that they *draw us into* them, and he *inflicts* them. And when sinful contents come home in ruine, and pleasures dy into damnation; then men will understand these treacherous loves, and find such friends are but *projectours* for the *Devil*; then they will hate them as they do their own damnation, discerning these are but the kindneses of *Hell*. Nay, it is possible, I may slander that place in speaking so ill of it. *Dives* will let us see there are affections of a kinder and more blessed strain in *Hell* Luke xvi. from the twenty-seventh verse; you find he did make truce with torments, that he might contrive and begg onely a message of repentance for his brethren; he did not mind at all his own dire Agonies, he minded so the reformation of his friends. Good God! when I reflect upon these *pieties* of the *damnd* together with the *practices* of those who have given their names in to *Religion*, when I see *fiends* in *Hell* do study how to make men *virtuous*, and *Christians* upon earth with all their art debauch them into *Vice* and *ruine*, I cannot choose but pray, *Grant*

me such friends as are in Hell. Rather grant us all the *friendship* in the *Text*. But then, we must have none with any vice. Friendship with that engageth into enmity with God and *Christ* I shew'd you. And to passe over all those after-retributions of vengeance *Christ* hath studied for his enemies, when he, that now courts us to be our friend, and we will make our *adversary*, must be our *Judge* : For were there none of this, and should we look no further then this life ; yet sure, we of this Nation know, what it is to have *God* our *enemy* ; who for so many years, lay under such inflictions, as had much of the character of his *last executions* ; they had the *blasphemies* and the *confusion*, the *dire guilts*, and the *black calamities*, and almost the *despair* and *irrecoverableness* of those in *Hell*. And though He be at *peace* with us at present, at least there is a truce ; yet I beseech you in the presence and the fear of God, to think in earnest, whether the present provocations of this Nation do not *equall* those that twenty years agoe engaged him into
Arms

Arms against us, and made him dash us so in pieces: whether those Actions of the *Clergy* be reformed, that made the people to abhorre their *function* and their *service*, the *Offerings* and *Ministers* of the Lord, and made God himself spew them out. 'Twere endless to go on to the *prophaneness*, to the *loose impieties* and the bold *Atheismes* of the *Laity*, especially of the *better-sort*; in short what one degree, or state or Sex is better? Sure I am, if we are not better, we are worse beyond expressi-on or recovery: who have resisted every method, and conquer'd all God's arts of doing good upon us, been too hard for his *judgments* and his *mercies* both.

'Tis true, when we lay gasping under his severe revenges, we then pretended to be humbled, *begg'd* to be reconciled and be at peace with him, and *vow'd* to his conditions, promising obedience, and *aliened* our selves from our old sins, his foes. But then, when *Christ* came to *confirm* this amity, came dress'd with all his courtships, brought all the invitations of Love along, Our *Prince* and our *Religion*, our *Church*

and State, *Righteousness* and Peace, and the Beauty of *Holyness*, every thing that might make us be an happy and a pious nation, thus he did tempt, and labour to engage that friendship which we offered him and vowed to him: And we no sooner seiz'd all this, but we break *resolutions* as well as *duty*, to get loose from him; and laden with the spoils of our defeated Saviour's goodness, we joyne hands with his enemies, resume our old acquaintance-sins, enrich and serve them with his bounties, make appear that we onely drew him in, to work such miracles, but to assist our *Worldlyness*, *Ambitions* and *Lusts*, to be our opportunities of vice, and provocation of him. And being thus affronted and refused, his enemy preferr'd, *not this God but Barabbas*, any the vilest thing for friend, rather than *Christ*, must he not needs be more our enemy then heretofore? And if he be, that question will concerns us, ^(a) *Are we stronger then God?* It should behove us not to fall out with him till we are. See how he does prepare himself for the encounter. *Wisedome v.*
Taking

(a) 1 Cor. x.
 23.

Taking his jealousy for armour, putting on Justice, severe and vindicative Justice, as a breast plate; and, his wrath sharpening as a sword; and, arming all the creatures for auxiliaries. Alas! when omnipotence does express it self as scarcely strong enough for execution, but *Almightyness* will be armed also for vengeance, will assume Weapons, call in aides for fury, who shall stand it? Will our friends think you keep it off us, and secure us? did we consider how uneasy God accounts himself, till he begin the storme, while he keeps off his plagues from overrunning such a land, we would expect them every moment, and they must come. ^(a) Ah, says he, I will ease me of mine adversaries, and avenge me of mine enemies; and then, in what condition are we if God can have no ease but in our ruine, if he does hunger and thirst after it, go to his vengeance, as to a feast. And if you reade the xxv. Chapter of *Isaiah*, you will find there a rich bill of fare, which his revenge upon his enemies does make, view the sixth verse. He that enjoys his morsels, that lays out his contrivances, and

Verse 17

19.

20.

() *Isay* i. 29

studies on his dishes so as if he meant to cram his *Soul*, let him know what delight soe're he findes, when he hath spoild the elements of their inhabitants, to furnish his own belly, and not content with *natures* delicacies neither, hath given them forc'd fatnesses, changing the very *flesh* into a marrow, suppling the *bones* almost into that oyle that they were made to keep; all this delight the Lord by his expressions does seem to take in his dread executions on his *enemies*, a *sinful people*.

And if the vicious friendships of the *world* have so much more attractive then *Christ's* love and favour, and the happy consequences of it, as to counterpoise all the danger of such enmity, you may joyn hands with them: but if *his* be the safer and more advantageous, then hearken to his *propositions* and *beseechings*; for He does begg it of you: as he treated this reconciliation in his *blood*, so he does in *Petitions* too. For saith Saint ^(a) Paul, *We are Ambassadors for Christ, as if God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ's stead, Be you reconciled, and then be*
Gene-

(a) 2 Cor. v.
20.

Generous towards your GOD and Saviour; and having brought him as it were upon his knees, reduc'd him to entreaties, be friends, and condescend to him and your own happiness. If He be for you, take no care then, who can be against you. His friendship will secure you not onely from your enemies but from Hostility it self; for, when a man's ways please the Lord he will make even his enemies to be at peace with him. Prov. xvi. 7. He will reconcile all but Vices. And afterwards see what a blessed throng of friends, we shall be all initiated into. Heb. xii. 23. To an innumerable company of Angels, to the general assembly, and Church of the first-born that are written in Heaven, to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of Just men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediatour of the new Covenant. &c. And of this blest Corona, we our selves shall be a noble and a glorious part, inflamed all with that mutual Love, that kindles Seraphims, and that streams out into an heavenly glory, filling that Region of immortal love and blessedness; and being friends, that is, made one with Father, Son, and

and *Holy Ghost*, that *Trinity of Love*, we shall enjoy, what we do now desire to ascribe to them,, *All Honour, Glory, Power, Majesty, and Dominion, for evermore.*

Amen.

FINIS.

ERRATA.

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